



BENDING WITH THE BREEZE

Integrative Strategies for Wellness Across the Seasons

INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE AT HENNEPIN HEALTHCARE

The Person-Centered and Culturally-Inspired Division of Integrative Health at Hennepin Healthcare is grounded in a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to partnering with patients, community, and each other to nurture healing, uncover root causes of illness, and offer whole-person, customized care to cultivate well-being for everyone.



COMING TO OUR SENSES THIS WINTER

Mindfulness teacher Cass McLaughlin invites us all to lean into the beauty and peacefulness of winter

Transitioning into **Winter in Minnesota** is like holding our breath with the anticipation of releasing it, letting go again and again as Winter settles. For me, it is anticipating past experiences and feeling tension into the future that has not yet arrived.

I think of blankets of snow or no snow. Fast or floating snowflakes of all sizes falling with or without wind. Then shoveling, shoveling, and more shoveling. Cold brisk air and smoke like breaths and catching snowflakes on the tongue. The snow glistening like little diamonds under a clear blue sky in the moonlight. And the bright sun warming a bundled-up body often puts a smile on my face. The silence of empty streets, walks on crunchy ice, minding each step so as not to slip. Darkness ascending and then descending from the beginning, middle, and end of this season.

All seasons invite us to **"come to our senses"** but nothing like Winter. For me winter is a season to deepen my mindfulness practice in everyday life. It's like the urge to hunker inside in the winter becomes an **invitation to slow down**. Avoiding trying to get somewhere else other than here. This season calls us to be intentional about movement, beckoning us to slow down, feel the air, move into stillness and the quieting of activity. To abide in more reflection, on perhaps what really has heart and meaning which vacillates between staying put inside or going outdoors. Either way, in winter we can experience more of the **stillness of the season**.

With mindfulness, each season awakens various aspects of the senses: sights, smells, touch, tastes, and sounds - including the sounds of silence. Everything around us in the Winter models our slowing down. So here are a few books to curl up with this season when you choose to be available staying put. **Joseph Bailey's Slowing Down to the Speed of Love** could be a metaphor for really stepping out of the fast lane and moving into the slow lane, as cultural anthropologist Angeles Arrien says, "life happens in the slow to medium lanes".

Winter is a time to be gentle with yourself and with others, to step into difficult times as **Katherine May** describes in **Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times**. I am looking forward to this wisdom from the winters we encounter in our lives.

Mindfulness meditation practice is a way to "Pause, Rest and Be" as in **Octavia Fr. Raheem's** book **Pause, Rest, and Be: Stillness Practices for Courage in Times of Change**.

Finally, several of us in the Integrative Health division are embarking on iRest Yoga Nidra, Integrative Restoration training. So, I am happy to share this new book by **Tracee Stanley** called: **A time of Radiant Rest: Yoga Nidra for Deep Relaxation and Awakened Clarity**.

So by the time Spring arrives, may YOU feel more relaxed, rested, renewed, and re-awakened to life from that place of seeing, hearing, feeling, knowing, and being what you love.

Morning Cacao

Ingredients

- 1.5 to 3 tablespoons of fair trade cacao
- 2 dates (pure maple syrup, agave syrup, or raw honey may also be used)
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- dash of cayenne pepper
- pinch of salt
- hot water (but not boiling)



Directions

Put all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth. Enjoy.

WINTER OFFERINGS

Group Medical Visits/Classes

- Gentle Yoga for Cancer Care* - Tuesdays 3-4pm (in-person or zoom)
- Staying Healthy: Recovering and Regaining Health from COVID-19* - 7 weeks, Wed 10am-12pm, begins 1/18 (zoom)
- Easing Pain Holistically: Emotions and Chronic Pain* - 8 weeks, Tues 1:30-3:30pm, begins 2/14 (in person)
- Blood Sugar Balance* - 8 weeks, Thurs 9am-11am, begins 1/19 (zoom)
- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction* - Dates TBD
- Healing Touch - Level 1* - 2/3-2/4, contact catherine.justice@hcmcd.org for info

Community Events

- Walk with a Doc* - Community walks for everyone on the **2nd Sunday of the Month (12/11, 1/8, 2/12)**, from **10-11am** at the **Mpls Institute of Art**
 - Mid-day Mindfulness Practice Breaks* - Thursdays 12-12:30 (zoom)
- For More Info on all Winter Offerings, Go To:**
www.hennepinhealthcare.org/specialty/integrative-health/

PROVIDER SPOTLIGHT

Get to know our newest providers... *Charlotte Alvaraz, LAc and*

Danielle Berres, DPT
Danielle Berres, DPT



Charlotte Alvaraz, LAc

What is your specialty? Acupuncture
What do you love most about your job? My favorite part of being an acupuncturist is collaborating as a partner with my patients, acting as a guide and support in the quest for optimum health. The relationship and rapport between provider and patient is of utmost importance to me.

What brings you comfort in winter time? I enjoy the rejuvenation that winter brings -- the natural slowing down, the stillness, the invitation for restoration, the darker days and longer nights. A cold, snowy Minnesota winter encourages rest and nourishment. It's an ideal time to spend more time cultivating important relationships, including the one with oneself.

What is a healthy pleasure of yours? My morning ritual. I wake before the sun, brew a hot cup of ceremonial grade cacao, gaze at candlelight, listen to beautiful music, breathe intentionally, read a spiritual passage and quietly reflect.



What is your specialty? Integrative Physical Therapy

What do you love most about your job? I love discussing all the components of health with my patients – not just physical health but sleep, emotional health, mind-body practices, and spiritual health. It gives me a more well-rounded picture of the person I am working with and to meet them where they are on their journey.

What brings you comfort in winter time? If I don't have to drive in it, I really do love the snow! I love playing in it with my family and am looking forward to teaching my 3-year-old to ski. I also love cooking hearty meals, creating elaborate menus for holiday dinners and spending days planning, shopping, and cooking with family.

What is a healthy pleasure of yours? Wandering around art galleries. I get the physical benefits of slow, mindful walking, along with the mental benefits of looking at beautiful creations. I also love spontaneous dance parties with my two toddlers – we love changing lyrics to something silly and dancing until we fall on the couch! I am a strong believer in the concept of play, not only for children, but adults, too – I encourage my patients to play when they practice their PT exercises so that they can find joy and decrease pain.

Lines for Winter

By Mark Strand

Tell yourself
as it gets cold and gray falls
from the air
that you will go on
walking, hearing
the same tune no matter where
you find yourself—
inside the dome of dark
or under the cracking white

of the moon's gaze in a
valley of snow.
Tonight as it gets cold
tell yourself
what you know which is
nothing
but the tune your bones
play
as you keep going. And
you will be able
for once to lie down under

the small fire
of winter stars.
And if it happens that you cannot
go on or turn back
and you find yourself
where you will be at the end,

tell yourself
in that final
flowing of cold
through your
limbs
that you love what
you are.